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23rd Letters About Literature Writing Contest Announces Winners

Read. Be Inspired. Write Back



Charleston, W. VA. – The WV Center for the Book, an affiliate of the national Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, held the 2016 *Letters About Literature* awards ceremony at the West Virginia Culture Center on Thursday, May 19, 2016. Local author Anna Egan Smucker spoke at the event where the state level recipients were also recognized.

Letters About Literature is a national reading and writing program of The Center for the Book in The Library of Congress, and supported locally by the West Virginia Center for the Book at the West Virginia Library Commission. The theme for this year's writing competition was *How Did an Author's Work Change Your View of the World or Yourself?* Students in grades 4-12 (divided by Levels 1-3) wrote letters to authors (living or dead) telling them how a fiction or nonfiction book, poem, or play by that author affected them personally.

This year 768 students from West Virginia were among the more than 47,000 students nationwide who wrote *Letters About Literature*. National screeners selected 103 of the West Virginia entries for state level judging. Judges, chosen by the West Virginia Center for the Book, determined the top letters in each

competition level for the state. Entries for state level judging were selected on how well they met the required criteria of: audience, purpose, grammatical conventions, and originality.

Those receiving “Top Honors” advance to the national level judging. The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress selects a panel of judges to award national winners and national honor winners. West Virginia Governor Earl Ray Tomblin states, “The *Letters About Literature* competition offers the perfect opportunity to showcase our state’s most gifted students in grades four through twelve. This experience is undoubtedly a key to learning; and those who avidly read and write excel in both academics and in life.”

The Library of Congress will announce all National and National Honor Winners and awards and will list all state-level winners on its website: www.read.gov/letters/. The annual *Letters About Literature* writing contest for young readers is made possible by a generous grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, with additional support from gifts to the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress.

The West Virginia Library Commission is proud to announce the following state level recipients:

Level 1: Grades 4-6

TOP HONORS: Kiley Harmon (Fairmont Catholic Grade School)

HONORS: Paige Galvan (Hurricane MS), Matthew Olivero (Hurricane MS)

HONORABLE MENTION: Isaac Lowe (Hurricane MS), Skylar Elliot (Hurricane MS), Olivia Noel (Hurricane MS), Zoe Green (Hurricane MS), Melia Beckford (Hurricane MS), Zabelle Duff (Hurricane MS), Kantley McKown (Hurricane MS), Jessica West (George C. Weimer Elementary), and Nick Brooks (George C. Weimer Elementary)

Level 2: Grades 7-8

TOP HONORS: Maryam Rawash (John Adams MS)

HONORS: Peregrine Schray (Huntington MS), Ana Maria Gayton (John Adams MS)

HONORABLE MENTION: Lindsay Lenz (The Linsly School), Creed Kidney (Sherrard MS), Hannah Bex (The Linsly School), Alexa Bragg (Crum MS), Zoe Bizzari (The Linsly School), Sophie Wolfe (John Adams MS), Emily Anderson (Sherrard MS), Zhenduo Wu (The Linsly School), and Shawna Lockard (Crum MS)

Level 3: Grades 9-12

TOP HONORS: Olivia White (Roane County HS)

HONORS: Hannah Hardman (Roane County HS), Imone’ Velez (Washington HS)

HONORABLE MENTION: Holly Lloyd (Roane County HS), Mackenzie Chambers (Richwood HS), Astrid “Cade” Fisher (James Monroe HS), Kaitlin Bush (Roane County HS), John Antolini (Buckhannon-Upshur HS), Matteo Cerasoli (Washington HS), Phillip Sheets (Roane County HS), Kassidy Bogden (Washington HS), and Shelby Snyder (Wirt County HS)

Notable Mention:

Level 1

Mackenzie Boltz (Hurricane MS), Hunter Burdette (Hurricane MS), Marcy A. Canterbury (Hurricane MS), Sarah Daugherty (Hurricane MS), Camree Davis (Crum MS), Phoebe Flenner (Hurricane MS), Brooklyn Goheen (Hurricane MS), Skyla Hall (Crum MS), Alexis Hedrick (Hurricane MS), Carter Jackson (Hurricane MS), Noah Justice (Hurricane MS), Jacob Lanham (Hurricane MS), Carmela A. Lilly (Fairmont Catholic School), Alyson Long (Hurricane MS), Tanieca Newsome (Crum MS), Samantha Oxley (Hurricane MS), Macy Saunders

(Hurricane MS), River Sipes (West Taylor Elementary School), Trinity Sprague (Sun Valley Elementary School), Olivia Tharp (Overbrook Elementary School), Makayla Vaughn (Hurricane MS), and Tessa Walls (Hurricane MS)

Level 2

Ally Carson (The Linsly School), William Copley (Huntington MS), Isaac Dillon (Huntington MS), Mackenzie Graham (Huntington MS), Carissa Hennen (The Linsly School), Peter Kang (The Linsly School), Arella Kluvitse (The Linsly School), Sadie Palmer (Huntington MS), Hunter Smith (The Linsly School), Demetrios Svingos (Huntington MS), Billy Tobin (Huntington MS), Luke Zwicker (The Linsly School), Jessica Angius (Sherrard MS), Alexandria Behm (Sherrard MS), Andrew Clelland (The Linsly School), Faith Paull (The Linsly School), Ryan Huff (Sherrard MS), Andrea Kinneer (Sherrard MS), Chance Knight (The Linsly School), Lee Paull (The Linsly School), Ethan McDermott (The Linsly School), Andrew Nairn (The Linsly School), Eve Ridenhour (The Linsly School), and Zara Zervos (Sherrard MS)

Level 3

Nathanial S. Bayless (Richwood HS), Antonella Blanco (James Monroe HS), Kirstin Burwell (Richwood HS), Laura Dean (Buckhannon-Upshur HS), Rachel Fisher (Buckhannon-Upshur HS), Tristan D. Hall (Richwood HS), Sydney Hosfield (Buckhannon-Upshur HS), Ali Householder (Washington HS), Erin Jackson (Washington HS), Mary Kerby (Washington HS), Dale Locklear (Roane County HS), Cody McCune (Roane County HS), Samantha Parsons (Roane County HS), Caleb Shirley (Roane County HS), Jacob D. Sigley (Richwood HS), Emily Smith (Roane County HS), Luke G. Smith (Roane County HS), Shayla Stanley (Roane County HS), Ally Wharton (Washington HS), and Samuel Womack (James Monroe HS)

Buckhannon-Upshur High School: Buckhannon, WV

Crum Middle School: Crum, WV

Fairmont Catholic Grade School: Fairmont, WV

Huntington High School: Huntington, WV

Huntington Middle School: Huntington, WV

Hurricane Middle School: Hurricane, WV

James Monroe High School: Lindside, WV

John Adams Middle School: Charleston, WV

Overbrook Elementary School: Charleston, WV

Richwood High School: Richwood, WV

Roane County High School: Spencer, WV

Sherrard Middle School: Wheeling, WV

Sun Valley Elementary School: Lerona, WV

The Linsly School: Wheeling, WV

Washington High School: Charles Town, WV

West Taylor Elementary School: Flemington, WV

Wirt County High School: Elizabeth, WV

West Virginia Library Commission encourages lifelong learning, individual empowerment, civic engagement and an enriched quality of life by enhancing library and information services for all West Virginians. To learn more about the WVLC, please visit www.librarycommission.wv.gov or call us at 304-558-2041.